

Finely drawn

KARPOV'S WIN in the 9th game of the world championship match (see feature on previous page) was considered by many to be his finest achievement in the first 12 games of the match. Personally I prefer the eighth game; it ended in a draw after a marathon 80 moves, but it contained many brilliant subtleties:

GIUOCO PIANO OPENING

KARPOV	KORCHNOI
1. e4	e5
2. Nf3	Nc6
3. Bc4!	

This move was a sensation — Karpov had never in his career played a Giuoco Piano (or Italian Game as it is otherwise known).

3. ...	Bc5
4. c3	Nf6
5. d3	

So this is the idea — the quiet treatment of the Quiet Game (that's what Giuoco Piano means). We have now reached a position that can also arise by transposition from the Bishop's Opening.

5. ...	d6
6. Nbd2	a6
7. 0-0	0-0
8. Bb3	Ba7
9. h3	Be6
10. Bc2	

This bishop drops back to c2, giving the position a character similar to that of a restrained Ruy Lopez opening.

10. ...	d5
11. Re1	dxe4
12. dxe4	Nh5
13. Nf1	Qxd1
14. Rxd1	Rad8
15. Be3	f6
16. Bxa7	Nxa7
17. Ne3	Nf4

Many grandmasters would have already agreed such an equal-looking position a draw — what with one open file, queens off and the pawn structure balanced. It was from this very situation, however, that Karpov with almost magical accuracy was able to extract an advantage.

18. h4!	B17
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Korchnoi could not continue 18...Rxd1 ch 19.Rxd1 Bxa2 because of 20.g3! Ng6 (if White's pawn was still on h3 then 20...Nxb3 ch 21. Kg2 Be6 would be possible) 21.b3 Nb5 22.Ra1 Nxc3 23.Nd5! Nxd5 24.exd5 Bxb3 24. Bxb3 and White's bishop is superior to Black's three pawns.

19. Ne1	Nc8
20. f3	Ne6
21. Nd3	Rd7
22. Bb3	Ne7

The natural 22...Rfd8 fails to 23.Bxe6! Bxe6 24.Nc5 Rxd1 ch 25.Nxd1 Bxa2 26.Nxb7 Rd2 27.Rxa2 Rxd1 ch 28.Kh2 Rd2 29.Nc5 winning a pawn in the endgame.

23. Nd5	Nc6
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And again if 23...Rfd8 then 24.Nxe7 ch Rxe7 25.Nc5! is very strong — 25...Rxd1 ch 26.Rxd1 Nxc5 allows 27.Rd8 ch Re8 28.Rxe8 checkmate. It is fantastic the way Karpov is able to stop Korchnoi doubling on the d-file like this by the cunning arrangement of his minor pieces.

24. Ba4!	b5
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25. Bc2	Rfd8
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Finally Korchnoi doubles his rooks, but not without conceding queenside pawn weaknesses. Karpov immediately sets about exploiting them.

26. a4	Kf8
27. g3	Rd6
28. b4	Ne7
29. Ne3	Rc6
30. Ra3	Nc8
31. axb5	axb5
32. Kf2	Nb6
33. Nb2	Rxd1
34. Bxd1	Rd6
35. Be2	Be9
36. Ra5	Rd8
37. Ke1	c6
38. Ra6	Rb8
39. Bd1	Nc8
40. Nd3	Nc7
41. Ra5	Ra8

KORCHNOI



KARPOV

This was Korchnoi's sealed move in the adjourned position.

42. f4	exf4
43. gxf4	Nb6
44. Bf3	Rd8
45. Be2	Na4
46. Ra7	Rd7
47. Kd2	Ne6
48. Rxd7	Bxd7
49. Bg4	g6
50. f5	gxf5
51. Bxf5	Kg7
52. e5!	Nf8
53. Bxd7	Nxd7
54. e6	Ndb6

White's advantage persists right into an unusual four-knights endgame. But from this point on it is Korchnoi who steals the limelight by conducting a brilliant defence.

55. Nf4	Kf8
56. Kd3	Nc8
57. Ng4	Ke7
58. Nh6	Kd6
59. Kd4	Ne7
60. Nf7 ch	Kc7
61. Nh5	c5 chl

The saving counter-stroke — Black must activate his passive knight on a4.

62. bxc5	Nc6 ch
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Hardly daring to hope for 63.Kd5?? Nxc3 checkmate!

63. Ke3	Nxc5
64. Nxf6	Nxe6
65. h5	Nf8
66. Ke4	Kb6
67. Ng5	h6
68. Nf7	Ne6
69. Ne8	Nc5 ch
70. Ke3	Na4
71. Kd2	b4
72. cxb4	Nxb4
73. Nxb4	Nc5
74. Nf5	Nd5
75. h6	Ne4 ch
76. Kd3	Ng5
77. Kd4	Kc6
78. Nf7	Ne7
79. Nf6	Ng6
80. Nf5	Draw Agreed

After 80...Nf7 81.h7 Ng5 82.Ne7 ch! Kb7! 83.Nxg6 Nxh7 84.Nxh7 White cannot force mate with two knights against a lone Black king — one of the minor injustices of the laws of chess.

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